RoadRunner

BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Staff Newsletter July 2009

2008 Customer Service Winners Excel

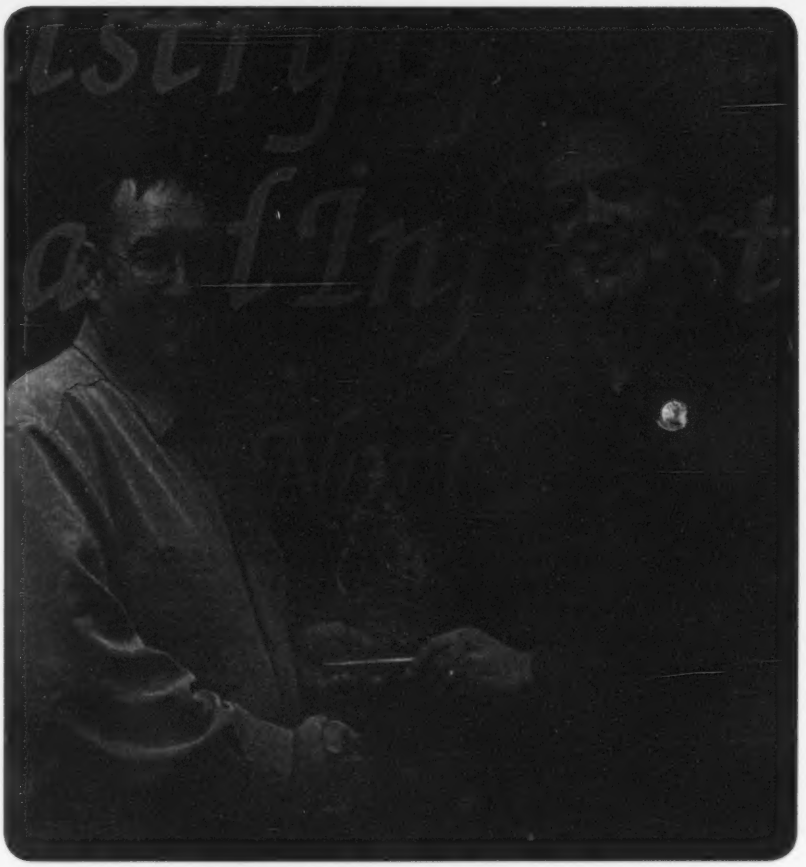
Submitted by Nicholas Baingo, Co-op Employee

In the spring of 2002, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure launched its first customer satisfaction survey. Since then, the survey delivered by the Properties and Business Management Branch, has evolved significantly in its scope and activity. Feedback from the survey helps the ministry continue to meet its customer service goals and objectives, identify strengths and find opportunities for improvement.

The survey also gives us the opportunity to recognize when districts have achieved high levels of customer satisfaction, and then find out what they did to achieve those levels of satisfaction. The results from the 2008 survey show that the ministry did very well overall, and achieved its target customer satisfaction score of 4.05 out of 5. Deputy Minister Peter Milburn described this as a great achievement and said, "It shows that the ministry is taking its commitment to service very seriously."

Three districts, in particular, did exceptionally well. The Peace and Fort George Districts tied for top honours with scores of 4.23, while the Rocky Mountain District showed the most improvement by increasing its score by 11 per cent in one year, to reach 4.09. These scores were described by the Deputy Minister as great accomplishments that showed that these districts excel in customer service.

We have asked representatives from each district to share with us a few of the secrets behind their customer satisfaction success. Here is what they had to say:



Fort George District Operations Manager Ron Marshall accepts the 2008 Award for Customer Service from Deputy Minister Peter Milburn. The district tied with the Peace District for the honour.

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Editor's Note

Eagleridge Interchange at the major Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project

Here's another big issue of Road Runner – 34 pages! But it's not just the hefty size that makes this a big newsletter – you'll find many extra-large themed stories in this edition.

At the enormous Sea-to-Sky Improvement Project, work is nearing completion. Large quantities of sweet treats have brought success to a fundraiser and a business – in two separate stories featuring cupcakes. Vast amounts of ingenuity are behind the ministry's new solar-powered webcam.

And a humanitarian mission to Haiti has had a deep personal impact on one employee.

Then there's employees having huge fun, while raising money aboard the Heart and Stroke Foundation's Big Bike. Ministry teams, in at least four offices, pedalled the 29-person contraption, as it travelled around the province.

And there was a bounty of barbecues and playful competitions for Public Service Week.

Because *Road Runner* is by and for employees, you'll find some extraordinary people profiled, including a CVSE inspector who delves far into safety infractions, in the high-crash area where he works. There's also a geo-technical employee who generously furthers the professional development of others.

No one, however, can match the massive physical scale of B.C.'s famed, yet elusive, sasquatch. Read on to discover how our ministry is prepared, should sasquatches be sighted making frequent highway crossings!

Nancy McLeod, Editor

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2008 Customer Service Winners Excel

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Peace District – Highest Score (Tie)

Renee Mounteney, Peace District Manager, attributes her district's success to a number of factors, including being flexible and open to new ideas regarding problem solving. District staff also worked hard to ensure that clients were directed to the person they should speak to without being "bounced around." As well, meetings were held with stakeholders to "discuss priorities, issues and concerns and incorporate them into ministry activities."

Fort George District – Highest Score (Tie)

Rick Blixrud, District Manager of the Fort George District, says that one of the biggest factors of their success was making customer orientation part of their culture. This meant focusing on customer service and helping clients to achieve their goals. This is not always easy when a district has a number of employees in different offices. It is because of this added challenge that Rick stresses the importance of good communication and keeping everyone informed of current issues.

Rocky Mountain District – Most Improved Score

District Manager Jack Bennetto and District Program Engineer Jeremy Zandbergen say that their district's success came from proactively improving customer service by reducing wait time for correspondence, while also ensuring that clients received full, knowledgeable responses. This was done through multiple activities, such as incorporating customer service into staff's Employee Performance and Development Plan goals, ensuring that front desk staff had all of the material necessary to assist clients, and creating a letter correspondence tracking system. The intended end result of these activities was to have district staff that were "working hard to be accessible, knowledgeable and helpful."

It's obvious that these districts' focused efforts to provide excellent customer service, have yielded impressive results. Congratulations to all the winners! ♦

Sea-to-Sky Highway Team Takes Last Technical Tour

Submitted by R. Bruce Striegler, Community Relations Officer

In what has become an annual event, since the 2003 beginning of construction on the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project, the project team took a technical tour, in mid June. What was notable, was that it was the final tour for the team, as the project nears completion.

Project Management Director David Chang and Executive Assistant/Office Manager Joyce Vaillancourt discuss the trials and successes of the last five years.

The group made eight stops to observe improvements of provincial parks and various new interchanges, and to view environmental impacts. In Squamish, the group was provided with an in-depth discussion of the issues and community concerns, and the resolution to the issue of east-west connectivity within the community.

Senior Project Director Grant Lachmuth says, "The April 7 opening of the new West Vancouver section, from Eagleridge Interchange on the south to the North Junction, signalled that the project is nearing substantial completion. We're in the sprint to the finish, with the difficult down slope construction complete, and as the contractor transitions from construction to paving."

Roadside Development Manager Al Planiden holds a branch of invasive plant species Japanese Knotweed, and talks about mitigation and eradication efforts.

The recently-opened West Vancouver segment has improved sightlines, and widened paved shoulders to accommodate cyclists and emergency pull-offs. Centre median barriers prevent head-on collisions. Additional safety improvements include the use of highly reflective pavement markings, representing the most advanced technology and highest safety standards available in highway markings. Drivers are warned by rumble strips, if they are out of their lane. Grant says, "With the completion of the West Vancouver section, there are now only three ongoing construction zones on the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project. Crews have been waiting for warmer weather before placing the final lift of pavement in the 17-kilometre Lions Bay to Doodson's Corner section, before we can declare substantial completion on that segment. New highway lanes will be fully open, but there will be occasional lane closures for finishing work like landscaping."

Work in the Squamish and Lions Bay areas is now nearly complete. "South of Whistler is the longest of the three remaining work zones," Grant noted. "However, most of the difficult work is now complete.

Some shifting of traffic will be needed as base lift and top lift of pavement still needs to done along much of the highway."

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Sea-to-Sky Highway Team Takes Last Technical Tour

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The $600-million project includes highway widening and straightening for improved sightlines. With added passing lanes and other design innovations, hazards will be reduced, and capacity increased.

When improvements are completed by the end of 2009, travel will be safer and more reliable for residents, commuters and visitors.

The improved highway will also serve the corridor's growth and travel demands. ♦

The Sea-to-Sky Project Team at a newly-constructed trailhead parking area near Porteau Cove.

Wildlife Crossings Improve Safety

Submitted by R. Bruce Striegler, Community Relations Officer

Drivers on the Sea-to-Sky Highway may be unaware that below the new highway, animals are safely moving about, using 19 wildlife crossings. Wildlife crossings on highways are increasingly used by highway designers and engineers to help keep animals off the road and safe from passing vehicles.

A special infra-red camera at one of the culverts captured this racoon embarking through the tunnel.

The Sea-to-Sky environmental team, led by Chief Environmental Officer Angela Buckingham, is responsible for auditing the concessionaire's environmental program. The program includes the installation of environmental mitigation features that provide habitat connectivity and safe wildlife passage along Highway 99.

The Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project has built nine one-metre PVC amphibian crossings, two two-metre concrete amphibian crossings and two large (three metre) corrugated steel pipe tunnels for large mammals. Cameras have been installed by the B.C. Ministry of Environment to monitor use of the crossings, by a variety of animals such as skunks, raccoons, deer and a mother duck with ducklings, which were recently sighted.

Wildlife crossing structures may be tunnels under the highway or bridges over it. Their features depend upon the terrain and the needs of the species inhabiting the area. Biologists and engineers determine what species are being targeted and evaluate which features will work best for the greatest number of species.

Along with the under-highway crossings, guide fencing is installed to help funnel wildlife to the safe passages. Not only do these wildlife crossings make roads safer for drivers and animals, by linking habitat with safe passages, they help preserve genetic diversity. ♦

Members of the Sea-to-Sky team inspect an animal crossing on the northern section of the route. This three-metre culvert is one of 19 specially-designed wildlife culverts along the corridor.

Business Continuity Blitz Spreads Across Province

Submitted by Nancy McLeod, BCP Advisor

Carrying a colourful garland of artificial flowers and an unusual deck of playing cards, Business Continuity Planning Advisor Josie Jones and I have been hitting the highways, booking up the boardrooms at HQ, and videoconferencing across the mountains with ministry employees.

Our mission: to lead employees through scenarios, where due to a natural or human-created disaster, their regular workplace is unavailable. With about 50 risks identified, there is no shortage of events that could shut down an office – from rodent infestations to chemical leakage to political action.

Maree Johnston, Tracy Wynnyk and Kevin Richter consult the South Interior Regional Office's BCP in a "wrecking ball into the building" scenario. (Kevin is supposed to be "on holidays").

Our goal: to help districts, branches and regional offices to see where their business continuity plan (BCP) will help them manage their priorities and people in such a situation...and where their plan needs more work, to ensure that everyone can swiftly resume their critical tasks.

Whoever picks the lowest card, is draped with the floral lei. This symbolizes that sometimes the people we rely on may not be there when we need them. They could – for instance – be away on a tropical holiday. Those who wear the garland are allowed only limited participation in the exercise, so the group can see how things work without that person. Does someone else have the knowledge that's needed?

And the cards...well...Josie bought those in Mexico, only to find the deck doesn't contain eights or nines. Does anyone know how to play El Chinchon? And just what is that giant baseball-bat shaped vegetation that the jack carries?

These and other props, bring fun and realism to the experience of a BCP exercise. People smile at the garland. They're much more sombre when the plastic anatomically correct heart is placed in front of them to signify a seriously injured co-worker.

Since November last year, Josie and I, in our roles as BCP Advisors with the Properties and Business Management Branch, have created and facilitated 10 exercises which involved 30 plans. By talking through their response to the individualized scenarios, employees identify how their alternative location will work for them, how they'll be able to access information that is normally at their fingertips, and how they will contact the people they need to reach. They also examine their listed essential tasks, how quickly they need to take action on them, and what people, software, or other equipment they'll need to accomplish those tasks.

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Nancy McLeod plays an on-site reporter interviewing Engineering Branch employees Wendy Grant and Gord Smith about the status of their building and co-workers.

5

TRA[illegible]g Five Mission Criticals

Ministry mission criticals are tasks, which if not performed, could lead to loss of life, hardship to citizens, major damage to the environment or loss of assets.

Not every employee delivers mission criticals. However, there are many tasks which support this work, and if not performed, could interfere with the delivery of essential services.

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has identified five ministry-wide mission criticals.

Legislated emergency response – reinstating access to highways and/or eliminating future risks from avalanches, ice jams, landslides, flooding, major accidents or loss of major infrastructure.

Traffic operations – programming lights and changeable message signs.

Radio and electronics – providing critical continuous communications to ministry staff, contractors, emergency response teams and all highway users.

Payment of contractors – paying maintenance contractor invoices continuously to ensure contractors have the financial capacity to support their equipment and supply purchases, and salary requirements.

Inland Ferries – providing an alternate highway system by monitoring and guiding contractors who provide ferry services.

Business Continuity Blitz Spreads Across Province

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Josie Jones asks, "Could you pull a rabbit out of a hat (or meet some other unexpected, high-urgency requirement) if you had to work from outside your office?"

"Exercises bring to life the words in a business continuity plan," says Josie. "Participants talk through the steps they would take, and sometimes make surprising discoveries. We have yet to work with a group, who hasn't as a result of the exercise, identified ways they will be strengthening their BCP."

Recent events have further raised recognition of the role that business continuity planning plays in providing critical services to the public, when the ministry is operating under less than ideal conditions. Late last year, Gateway employees activated their BCP and worked from other locations for six weeks when their Vancouver office flooded due to a broken water line.

In May, a bomb threat that cleared headquarters turned out to be hoax. However, if the building had become rubble, employees would be calling upon their business continuity plans.

The H1N1 flu had some branches thinking about how they would function in a full-blown pandemic scenario, where about 40 per cent of their workforce would be away due to illness, or caring for sick family members. Josie distributed a new section for all the ministry BCPs, which outlined some pre-planning activities, like developing work from home protocols.

Whether employees participate in BCP exercises, or they find themselves involved in a real life BCP scenario, like Gateway staff did, it's all a learning experience. The changes they make to their plans as a result of the experience will equip them better for the next exercise. And best yet, they will be even more prepared for the next fire, flood or other building catastrophe. ♦

The Brotherhood of the Travelling Pants

It is the morning of a career milestone...Evergreen Line Executive Project Director Dave Duncan is taking not only the ministry Executive on the first tour of his project, but also new Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Shirley Bond and her assistant, Rob Mackay-Dunn. There have been hours of planning and checking to make sure everything is "just so." After all, you have to make a good impression. Oh yes, it is to be a day of days!

Dave's preparation activities included arriving in Vancouver the day before, to make sure everything was in place. Monday morning arrived and all the items on the checklist were completed except for one small detail...Dave's attire. He discovered he had only brought half his suit... no pants!

What to do?! Thoughts of a purchase at Wal-Mart crossed his mind... but alterations would be required. Then a seemingly workable idea came to mind...call Lindsey Fanning, his amiable assistant, at home, and have her pick up the pants and get them to Dave Byng at the Helijet, by 6:30 a.m. Going above and beyond the call of duty, Lindsey complied and Dave Byng put the pants into his briefcase.

When Dave Byng arrives in Vancouver, Mr. Duncan is waiting...but where are his pants? There's no bag, only a briefcase. What was Minister Bond going to think of him? After a suitable length of time to allow panic to set in, Mr. Byng confesses that he is carrying the pants in his briefcase. The day is saved! Although somewhat rumpled, Mr. Duncan was suitably attired for his important day, and by all accounts the tour was a great success.

A "suit"ably attired Dave Duncan provides Minister Shirley Bond with a briefing on the Evergreen Line project.

Promoting Biodiversity in British Columbia

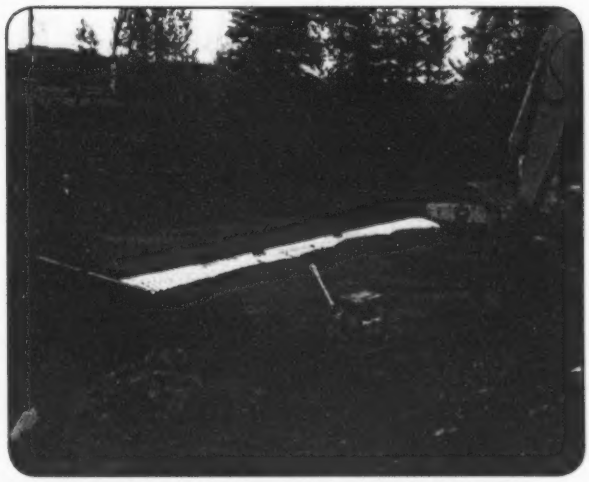
Submitted by Leonard Sielecki, Environmental Issues Analyst. Photos by Patricia House, Department of Fisheries and Oceans

British Columbia is Canada's most biologically diverse province or territory. The province is home to more than 1,100 species of vertebrates, including 488 bird, 468 fish, 142 mammal, 18 reptile, and 22 amphibian species. Within the province are found many species and ecosystems of local, regional, national and global significance.

From a continental perspective, the biodiversity in British Columbia is important because many sensitive species and ecosystems lost in other parts of Canada and the United States still survive here. In numerous cases, the species and ecosystems found in British Columbia exist nowhere else in North America. From a global perspective, some species and ecosystems are completely unique to our province, such as the Vancouver Island Marmot and the Kermode Bear.

According to the recently published Biodiversity Atlas of British Columbia, habitat connectivity is a critical factor for biodiversity. Without movement between critical habitats during all their lifecycles, fish and wildlife cannot survive. Throughout the province, as is the case in all jurisdictions in North America, roads and highways have the potential to create obstacles for fish and wildlife movement.

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has a long history of restoring and preserving the natural environment to support biodiversity conservation. Over a decade ago, the ministry foresaw the need to proactively retrofit and replace culverts which blocked or limited fish passage. In 1998, the ministry's Environmental Management Section initiated its Culvert Retrofit Program (CRP) to systematically examine ministry culverts throughout the province and alter those that created obstacles for fish passage. Working closely with the B.C. Ministry of Environment and the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans, our ministry has retrofitted or replaced hundreds of culverts throughout the province and improved fish access to hundreds of hectares of fish habitat.



Construction at St. Laurent Creek, south of Chase, funded by the Culvert Retrofit Program.

The CRP initiative was greatly augmented in 2003, when the ministry's Executive established the Environmental Enhancement Fund (EEF). The EEF was developed to support projects which link to the provincial highway infrastructure and directly enhance, restore or protect environmental resources like fish and wildlife populations and their habitat. Unique among transportation agencies in North America, the EEF has won numerous national awards, including the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Environmental Achievement Award and the Ducks Unlimited Platinum Award.

Before: The culvert at St. Laurent Creek limited the passage of fish.

Through the EEF, the ministry has focused its efforts to improve or restore fish passage wherever its roads and highways cross streams, rivers or other water bodies. Access for fish to underutilized habitat is provided through culvert retrofits and replacements. This approach helps restore the populations of prized species like coho and sockeye salmon to their former levels. The ministry has strategically acquired and protected ecologically sensitive and endangered habitats and ecosystems along its rights-of-way to protect them from future development. Fish and wildlife habitat enhancements have included the construction of salmon and trout rearing habitat and spawning channels, water storage to create wetlands or wetted habitat, and estuary and riparian planting enhancements. Other projects have involved pink salmon transplants to restore wild fish populations, the capture and relocation of Roosevelt Elk, Mountain Goats and Bighorn Sheep away from collision-prone locations to safer, suitable underutilized habitat, and the reduction of vehicle-related mortality for the Red-Legged Frog, Western Toad, Western Painted Turtle and American Badger through the strategic installation of fencing and crossing structures.

While the CRP and EEF programs are administered by Senior Fisheries Biologist Sean Wong, who is located in HQ, the ministry's

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Promoting Biodiversity in British Columbia

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Regional Environmental Managers have been instrumental in the successful delivery of CRP and EEF projects. While vast expanses of land may be more readily available in the more remote areas of the province, acquiring property for preserving fish and wildlife habitat along highways is not a simple task for the South Coast Region's Manager of Environmental Services Greg Czernick. Greg is responsible for more than 150,000 square kilometres, including the most densely populated and heavily travelled southwest corner of the province. In the Lower Mainland, the ministry faces a severe shortage of land available for fish and wildlife habitat restoration and enhancement projects, due to existing dense urban development, extremely high land costs and competition from municipalities attempting to secure land for their own habitat compensation needs.

After: The new culvert maintains biodiversity by improving access to fish habitat.

In the Southern Interior Region, a very large number of wildlife species are at the extreme northern end of their North American ranges. While these species may be common south of the Canada/U.S. border, they are typically rare or endangered in Canada and protected by Federal Species at Risk legislation. Consequently, the region's Environmental Services Manager Brent Persello, is always exploring opportunities to protect these species along the southern highways in an area approximately 260,000 square kilometres in size, stretching between Alberta and the Pacific Ocean, and bordering the U.S. states of Washington, Idaho and Montana.

The vast provincial highway network in the north and the extremely short construction windows force the Northern Region's Manager of Environmental Services Daryl Nolan, to balance time and distance carefully. In the delivery of CRP and EEF projects, Daryl singlehandedly oversees a 640,000 square-kilometre area that extends from the Alberta border to the Alaska border, an area that is larger than France or Germany.

Over the last 12 years, through the CRP and the EEF, the ministry has spent over $16 million for culvert replacements, habitat restoration and other initiatives to foster habitat connectivity and promote biodiversity. Throughout the province, the ministry's projects have involved numerous partners. In addition to the provincial environment ministry and the federal fisheries department, the ministry has established productive partnerships with environmental stewardship groups, private landowners, non-governmental organizations and local fish and game associations. Both the CRP and EEF programs continue to make fish and wildlife habitat connectivity – a fundamental requirement for maintaining biodiversity – a priority for the ministry.

Given their ongoing successes, the ministry's CRP and EEF programs offer a model for other agencies working to enhance habitat connectivity and support biodiversity. ♦

Submit your stories and photos to RoadRunner

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EAF Uses TV Show Tactics to Explore Ideas

Submitted by Kellie Gillette, Administrative Coordinator

Innovation Champion Jacques Dupas addresses the audience on the "Just Jackie Show".

As a brand-new member of the Employee Advisory Forum (EAF), I found our 2009 Spring Meeting an invaluable way to connect with the other forum members, even while feeling a bit like I'd just been thrown into the deep end of the pool.

Luckily for me and the other dozen or so new members, we had seasoned veterans to help guide us through an intense couple of days at the UBC campus.

The theme for the meeting was "EAF – Value Added" and all the activities and presentations focused around that message. Day one began with a heartfelt "thank you and so long" to Grant Lachmuth, who was stepping down from the position of EAF Chair.

We were then introduced to our new Chair, Rick Blixrud, and Vice-Chair Jackie Chambers, who bring an enormous amount of enthusiasm and energy to their roles. Together with facilitators Tracy Houser and Lori Wiedeman, they enabled the rest of the EAF to centre our energies on the tasks ahead.

After some light-hearted exercises that helped us get to know our fellow members and the value we all bring to the EAF, we were treated to an excellent presentation by Lee Herrin of BC Stats, explaining the details and showing the larger picture of the Workplace Environment Survey. Lee's explanation of the WES results, and the question and answer period following it, set us in a perfect spot to take a look at the makeup of the individual EAF teams.

With the latest WES results, which showed the areas where the ministry could improve, we were able to examine the five different teams, evaluate their current mandates, and update both the mandates and the teams' compositions. We introduced ourselves to our teammates and planned out some team tasks to cover the next day.

Our last presentation of the day was the "Just Jackie Show"! Our own Jackie Chambers turned into "Talk Show Host Extraordinaire" to lead the innovation panel, consisting of Director of Change Management from the Future of Work Initiative Rumon Carter; Assistant Director of Human Resources Lori Wiedeman; Team Sponsor Jacques Dupas; and Team Lead Trent Folk. Lori, Jacques and Trent are all Ministry Innovation Champions, a group that assesses ministry ideas that appear on the Spark website, and works to remove barriers to implementation.

They are also working to build on our culture of innovation and creativity outside of Spark ideas.

We were given a solid introduction to the Spark website and how it works, as well as a view to where it will go from here and how the EAF can help support the initiative.

Day two started out big with a talk from Deputy Minister Peter Milburn, which covered the challenges facing our ministry and the public service as a whole.

Although on an extremely tight schedule, Peter graciously opened up the floor for any and all questions and the EAF gratefully took advantage of it. It was an excellent opportunity to listen to and be heard by our top executive.

It was then time to really dig in and get to work on the team action plans.

Working with the tight deadline we had, we really needed Lori Wiedeman's fascinating "ritual assent/ dissent" process.

Artist's depiction of the dynamic "Just Jackie," (Jackie Chambers) drawn by Kellie Gillette.

continued on Page 10...

EAF Uses TV Show Tactics to Explore Ideas

...continued from Page 9

The technique brought forward a wide range of views, which helped us map out and refine what we wanted to accomplish. It is amazing what the teams managed to accomplish with the help of Rick, Jackie, Tracy, Lori and Grant.

The highlight of the action planning was most definitely the reality show, "EAF's Got Solutions" where each team presented their action plans to a panel of "Simon," "Paula" and "Randy" (aka Rick, Jackie and Grant).

Despite the light-hearted approach, or more likely because of it, each team came away with workable, practical plans that will carry us through to the next meeting.

Team Recognition members Shelley Keddy, Dennis Pryhitko, Todd Hubner and Brendan Fraser examine the issues in developing their plan.

Deputy Minister Peter Milburn thanks former EAF Chair Grant Lachmuth for his leadership to the group.

A couple of highlights from our two days:

- Lorena Gent from the Transportation Planning and Programming Branch who was so determined to attend her first EAF gathering, that she worked two business administration final exams around the meeting, finishing the second one via Internet in her room, after a full day of EAF work.
- Grant doing his best impression of Randy Jackson's "Yo dawwwwg!" which set the entire room laughing.

Also, a well-deserved thanks to Lori Wiedeman for her advocacy and tireless work in making the spring meeting happen.

Another note of appreciation goes to all the EAF members, who travelled many kilometres in carpools and braved dorm living, to take part in this important meeting. ♦

Do You Know?

Facts about Pay and Benefits

Brought to you by the

EAF's Team Appreciation

Employees are entitled to three days off when getting married!

Fourteenth Master Agreement (BCGEU), 2006 "wedding days" 20.2 (1) wedding of an employee – 3 days

You Are Not Alone...

Submitted by Debbie O'Brien, Team Leader, Team Balancing Act

Have you ever felt that you have reached the last straw? Have you ever felt that you have nowhere to turn and no one you can talk to? Does a member of your family need counselling and support?

B.C. Employee and Family Assistance Program offers help with a variety of issues.

There is a place where you can go to obtain professional, confidential assistance for relationship problems, family difficulties, stress, bereavement, grief, anger, depression, substance abuse or any other issue – the B.C. Employee and Family Assistance Program is just a phone call away. However, most people are not aware that they have access to this type of help. Each of us, regardless of our position in the ministry, faces many different problems in our day-to-day lives. Most of the time, we can work them out, but sometimes problems can become too much for us to handle ourselves. When this happens, it can affect our happiness, our personal and business relationships and our work performance. Often our health suffers as a result of being unable to cope effectively. All regular, full-time or part-time employees are eligible for six counselling sessions per year, and one session is considered to be one hour.

This service is also available to family members who normally reside with you. Auxiliary employees and their families are also entitled to this benefit, provided that the auxiliary employee has reached 1,827 hours over 15 months, or has worked three consecutive years without loss of seniority and maintained 1,200 straight time hours worked within the previous 12 months.

As members of the ministry's Employee Advisory Forum, Team Balancing Act focuses on health, wellness and workload/worklife balance. The current economic climate can cause stress and anxiety, and our team felt it was a good time to bring this topic forward, to raise awareness of this important benefit.

This service is completely confidential, and you can call toll-free, any time, night or day, to book a counselling appointment. For more information see the B.C. Employee and Family Assistance Program website. If you need help, call 1-800-655-5004, and start seeking some healthy solutions. ♦

Top 12 Tips for Work/Life Management

Submitted by Janice Kerr, Team Balancing Act

Here are 12 tips to help reduce stress and achieve a balanced lifestyle.

- Schedule brief breaks for yourself throughout the day. Your productivity and effectiveness will increase if you take even a ten-minute break every two hours, and overall, you will get more accomplished.
- At the end of each day, set your priorities for the following day. Be realistic about what you can achieve in the time you have available.
- Make a distinction between work and the rest of your life. Protect your private time by turning off electronic communications. Don't be available 24/7.
- Create a buffer between work and home. After work, take a brief walk, do a crossword puzzle, or listen to some music before beginning the evening's routine.
- Exercise. Even if it's only for 15 minutes at a time, you'll feel more energized and refreshed.
- Learn stress-management skills. Try new hobbies or sports. Read a book. Take a stress-management class. Explore a variety of active and quiet activities.
- Eat healthy food. Include lots of fruits and vegetables. Limit the amount of sugar and fat. Learn about and use the food pyramid to eat the right balance of food.
- Make dates with yourself. Use a calendar. Set aside time to do things that reduce your stress.
- Take time out. Count to 100. Walk away from the situation. Calm down before you make big decisions.
- Learn to say "no". Take time to make decisions. Don't agree to do more than you have time or energy to do.
- Do one thing at a time. Concentrate on the task at hand. Try not to worry about other things you need to do.
- Take a two-hour mini-vacation. See an enjoyable movie. Go for a long walk. Listen to your favourite music. Have dinner with a friend.

Bonus Tip: Clip this, and keep it on your desk, in your wallet or on your fridge, to remind yourself to keep your life in balance.

Day Labour Begins on Kicking Horse Canyon Project

Submitted by Leanne Flood, Stakeholder Relations

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has been using hired equipment lists for day labour projects since the late 1970s, but the lists are being used for the first time on the Kicking Horse Canyon Project.

At the beginning of April, it was announced that the Hill to Portal section of Phase 3 would be advanced by one full year. In order to start preparatory construction as quickly as possible on the extension of the fourth lane of the Trans-Canada Highway down Golden Hill, the project chose to use day labour.

Since May 11, local operators have been hired to perform logging, hauling, bulldozing, excavating, packing, watering (for air quality/dust control), and traffic control. At the peak of activity this summer, about 30 workers/equipment operators are expected to be on-site.

Finding interested local equipment operators was definitely not an issue. In fact, the day labour project couldn't have come at a better time for the local economy in Golden, which has been impacted by recent economic events, particularly for lumber-related businesses. Project Technician Adriana da Costa says, "The logging crew is especially happy this work is occurring during the spring shutdown, so they are able to take part in the day labour activities."

Follow up work will be carried out in mid-August, including drainage improvements and line painting. The project team is also reviewing options to engage the local work force in slope stabilization and re-vegetation activities.

Local hired equipment and traffic controllers work above the Trans-Canada Highway, with the Town of Golden as a scenic backdrop. Photo by Adriana da Costa.

The rest of the Hill to Portal section involves grade reduction, access consolidation, grade separation at Golden Donald Upper Road, cycling/pedestrian improvements, wildlife fencing, ungulate guards on access roads (to keep out deer, elk, mountain goats, moose and bighorn sheep) and a special wildlife crossing.

These improvements will proceed with a design-build arrangement, which provides for quicker delivery by combining the design stage and the construction stage into one contract. ♦

Have You Ever Been to Cat's Rug, B.C.?

Submitted by Beverley van Druten-Blais, Graphic Design Specialist

Summertime is a great time to travel and learn more about our beautiful province. While on the road, at a beach, or enjoying some sunny time off, see if you can match these odd and unusual descriptions with towns, cities and places in B.C.

The first person to come up with all the answers and submit them to RoadRunner@gov.bc.ca will receive a gift! ♦

1. Former Queen
2. Fishy Appendage
3. To Woo a Joint
4. 2,000 lb. Monarch
5. Pursue
6. Sea Drops
7. Between Faith and Charity
8. Horse Drawn Buggy
9. Century Home
10. Big Utensils
11. Award
12. Massachusetts Tavern
13. Open Pasture
14. Path
15. Scottish Newlywed
16. Coloured Stone
17. Noisy Dog Tavern
18. Who's on First's Chevy
19. Cool Hit
20. Money River
21. Mineral Creek
22. Tough Limb
23. Devil's Entrance
24. Bee's Bottom
25. Bill's Pond
26. Ice Cream Bar
27. Sweet Bar
28. Sets Fire to Water
29. Overcook a Honeymaker
30. Shelter for a Panel Truck
31. Gritty Saliva
32. Recent Preacher from East
33. Attack a Large Animal
34. Premier's Foot
35. Mom in Rocking Chair
36. Dickens' Character
37. Admiral of the Fleet
38. Cat's Rug
39. Balcony
40. Not Strike Three
41. Syrup Height
42. Soup Stream
43. Texas Town
44. It's in the Way
45. Coloured Water
46. Automobile Shaft Circles
47. Four Leaf Town
48. Royal Boy
49. Kootenay Fortress
50. Leaving Cove
51. This Fort Will Rust
52. A Lot of Talking Here
53. You Can Say Anything Here
54. A Sense of Purpose
55. A Row of Tall Trees
56. Radioactive Hot Water
57. All that Glitters is Not
58. 2,000 lb. Shield
59. Left Side of Cantaloupe
60. Woman at Forge
61. Bob's Financial Institution
62. Fuzzy Joint
63. Transparent Fluid
64. Wide Awake Cove
65. Exchange Footwear
66. Never a Skin Irritation
67. 2,000 lbs. of Nuts
68. Lock Type
69. A Cool Beauty
70. Acrobat's Peak ♦

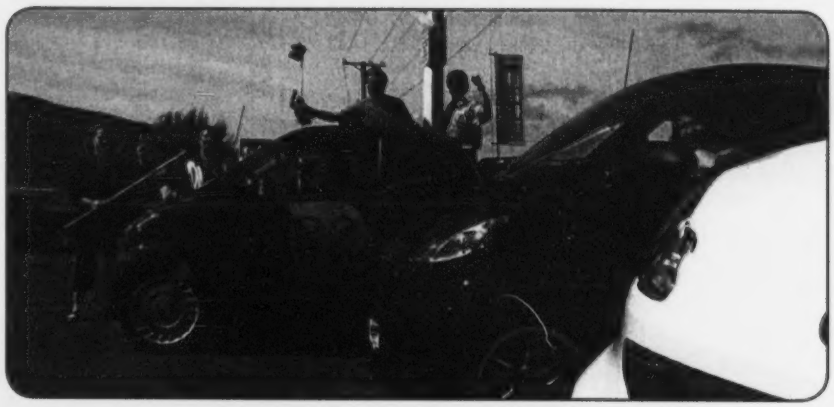
Region Celebrates WES Win the Smart Way

Submitted by Crystal Chenier, Secretary, Finance and Administration

Yippee – the South Interior Region won the Workforce Environment Survey Participation Race for 2009!

This was a first-time achievement for our region. We came out ahead, with 86 per cent of employees completing the survey. In the Northern Region, 85 per cent expressed their views, while participation in Headquarters and the South Coast Region was 82 per cent.

We won the bragging rights! So, we decided to celebrate our performance, as it can be seen on the WES Survey Rally 2009 page of the EAF website: http://gww.th.gov.bc.ca/eaf/race2009/race.asp. On May 4, we went to Zimmer Auto Sport Ltd., in Kamloops, and had our photo taken in Smart Cars! ♦



Jeanne Reeves, Shauna Carlson, Tom Freeman and Kevin Richter cheer their region's win. Inside the "Region 2" red car are Crystal Chenier and Julian Malinsky. Bonnie Cameron is at the wheel of the black car.

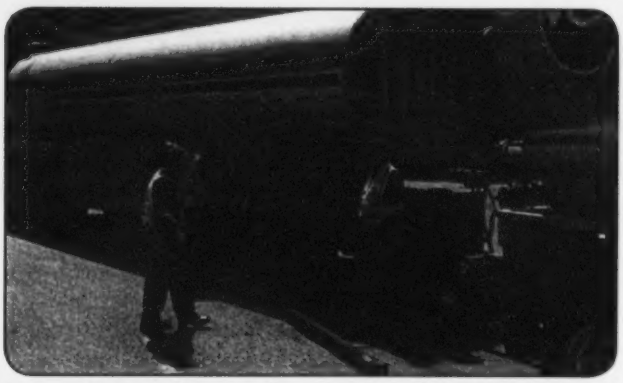
CVSE Annual Road Check – June 2 to 4

Submitted by Cindy Hogg, Inspection Station Supervisor

The annual Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) International Road Check was held at four B.C. locations in early June. There were three road checks in Hope and one in Pouce Coupe. The annual road check is held across Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, not only to inspect trucks and buses but to give a snapshot of the condition of vehicles, motor coaches, and their drivers, within the commercial transport industry, throughout North America. The check ran from 7 a.m., June 2, to 8 p.m., June 4.

This year, as in the past, CVSE sent out invitations to outside enforcement agencies to participate and work together to improve road safety within the province. There were approximately 85 enforcement officers in attendance – 55 from CVSE and 30 from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Delta Police, Vancouver City Police, RCMP, Industry Canada, Passenger Transportation Branch, WorkSafeBC and Ministry of Forests.

The trucks and buses that are stopped for inspection are chosen randomly. Each inspection time varies 20 minutes to one hour, depending on the vehicle. The majority of inspections conducted were CVSA Level 1 inspections, which are the most rigorous of all roadside inspections. In B.C., our total Out of Service (OOS) rate for trucks and buses was 20.8 per cent and our Driver Rate was 4.2 per cent. The OOS rating for a vehicle means it is not allowed to leave the inspection station, until the vehicle is repaired or taken away by a tow truck. The OOS rate for a driver means they are not allowed to drive a commercial vehicle for the time specified by the inspector.



Commercial Transport Enforcement Officer Donna Rowe (left) and Dangerous Goods Inspector Rick Philbrick (right) about to inspect the hose certification on a fuel tanker.

CVSA results from International Road Check 2009:

- Total Level 1 Inspections conducted at all four sites:
  692 inspections, 144 OOS vehicles (20.8%), 29 OOS drivers (4.2%)
- Trucks only:
  637 inspections, 138 OOS vehicles (21.7%), 28 OOS drivers (4.4 %)
- Buses Only:
  55 Level 1 inspections, six OOS vehicles (10.9%), one OOS driver (1.8 %)

The success of this year's road check lies in the hands of all of CVSE inspectors. Whether they attended or not, the ability to work as a team together with outside enforcement agencies to create safer roads in B.C., is something we should all be proud of.

Thank you for your continued participation and dedication to making B.C.'s highways safe. ♦

Modified Motorcycle Passes Road Test

Submitted by Cindy Hogg, Inspection Station Supervisor

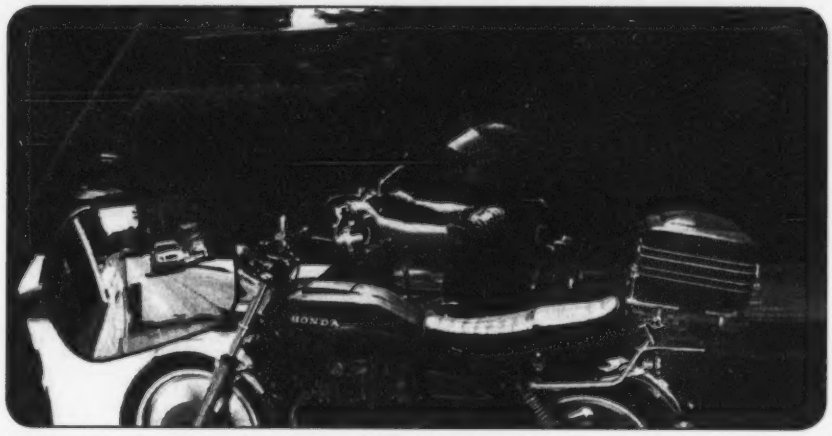
The following is a great example of the power of cooperation between government and its private sector partners, to provide excellent customer service and a safe highway system.

A gentleman, who uses a wheelchair to get around, submitted an application to ICBC for collector plates for his 1978 Honda CB400A motorcycle. ICBC became alarmed that previous modifications to the motorcycle, to accommodate the man's disability, could render the vehicle unsafe for highway operation.

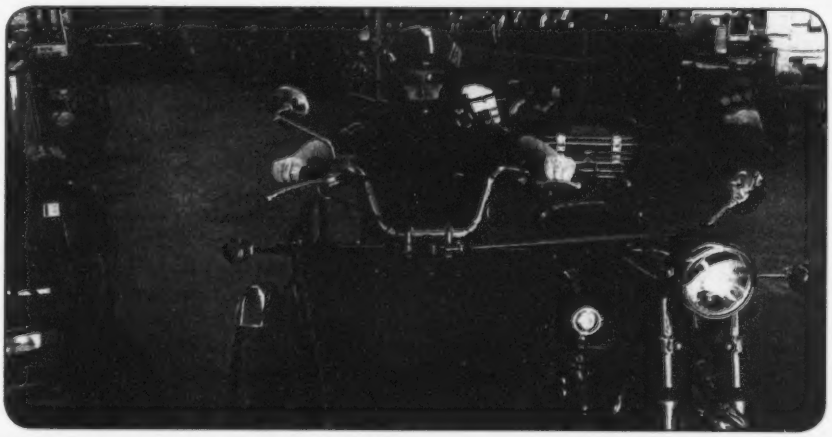
The driver controls had been relocated to the sidecar, where the rider could operate the machine while seated in his wheelchair. CVSE Area Vehicle Inspector Neil Brown, of the Chilliwack Office, arranged to have the modified motorcycle undergo a Private Vehicle Inspection Program inspection.

The inspection was done by Authorized Inspector Ron Block, of 3-D Cycles, in Abbotsford. His inspection of the motorcycle uncovered some safety defects that were subsequently repaired. Due to the vehicle's unconventional configuration, Ron then contacted Neil, to come and oversee the final part of the vehicle inspection. Neil did the road testing, and found the motorcycle to be a stable vehicle with sufficient power to maintain highway cruising speeds. As well, the vehicle's brakes were more than adequate to stop the motorcycle safely.

The vehicle passed inspection by complying with all the applicable criteria for a motorcycle, and was issued an inspection decal by Ron. ♦



CVSE Area Vehicle Inspector Neil Brown road tests the modified motorcycle.



Front view of the adapted Honda with wheelchair sidecar.

Is it "Red-Listed?" Protecting the Elusive Sasquatch in B.C.

Submitted by Leonard Sielecki, Environmental Issues Analyst

During recent discussions about wildlife warning signs with senior traffic safety engineers of U.S. state departments of transportation, I was asked by Mississippi's State Traffic Engineer, if our ministry had a "sasquatch" warning sign.

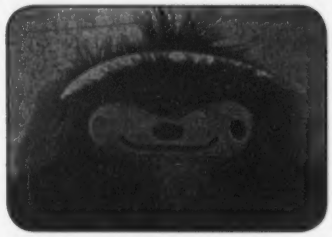
I was caught flat-footed. Although our ministry has the most comprehensive inventory of species-specific wildlife warning signs of any transportation agency in the world, I wasn't certain it didn't have a sasquatch warning sign.

As a follow-up, I did some searching and discovered a sasquatch warning sign was installed somewhere near Kelowna. When I showed Engineer in Training Jennifer Hardy, who is with HQ's Traffic, Electrical, Highway Safety, and Geometric Standards Section, a picture of the sign, she told me it wasn't a ministry sign. The silhouette wasn't hairy enough to accurately depict a real sasquatch.

Unfortunately, as far as sasquatches were concerned, my knowledge about the creatures was limited to what I had learned from Kokanee Beer commercials.

As the ministry's wildlife expert, I figured I'd better get up to speed on the subject fast. I Googled "sasquatches" and found the 2010 Olympics have "Quatchi", a sasquatch, as one of its mascots. According to the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, "The sasquatch is a popular figure in local native legends of the Pacific West Coast. The sasquatch reminds us of the mystery and wonder that exist in the natural world, igniting our imagination about the possibility of undiscovered creatures in the great Canadian wilderness."

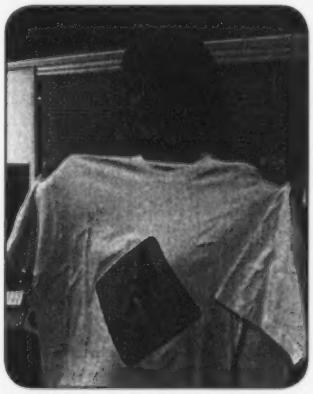
If it came to the issue of being "undiscovered," then sasquatches have certainly been seen enough times. Eyewitnesses are remarkably consistent in their description of the sasquatches encountered or observed. They report a large, upright, human-like animal standing or walking on its hind legs. Like a human, the shoulders are prominent, but the neck is short and thick. The animal is typically covered with coarse dark hair and its arms are longer than those of a human. Apparently sasquatches have such a strong stench, similar to rotten eggs or rotten meat, that it makes one gag or want to vomit.



Olympic mascot Quatchi can be easily sighted in B.C. retail outlets.

According to registered professional biologist Dr. John A. Bindernagel, the world's most prominent sasquatch authority, the animals have been reported to have been seen more than 3,000 times across North America, and more than 100 sets of footprints have been cast and archived. In British Columbia, sasquatch sightings have been reported near Harrison Lake and Bradley Lagoon in the South Coast Region, near Cranbrook and Fruitvale in the Southern Interior Region, and near Houston and Moricetown in the Northern Region. Dr. Bindernagel told me sasquatch sightings have been reported more than 150 times on Vancouver Island alone. It appears sasquatches have been seen more often in the province than the elusive Pacific Water Shrew, a federally red-listed species the ministry is working hard to protect in the Lower Mainland.

According to sasquatch literature, a number of the animals have been involved in motor vehicle accidents, but to date no carcasses have been recovered. Over the last 30 years, the ministry's Wildlife Accident Reporting System has never had a single sasquatch reported. However, there had been a number of "unknown" species discovered by the ministry's Maintenance Contractors in locations coinciding closely with reported sasquatch sightings.



Graphics Production Technician Kathy Macovichuk displays the sasquatch crossing T-shirt, which will be awarded to the employee who submits the best sasquatch photo.

Since sasquatches are suspected to grow upwards of 2.5 metres in height and weigh between 250 and 400 kilograms, I felt they could represent a significant hazard to the motoring public. I also figured if someone had already taken steps to install a non-conforming sasquatch warning sign on a ministry right-of-way, the ministry needed to have a conforming sign in its inventory, in the event one was required for ministry purposes.

When I asked Chief Engineer Dirk Nyland at HQ, about the implications of having a warning sign for a mythological animal, Dirk remarked "It's not mythological, if you can't prove it never existed." Faced with this profound convincing logic, I decided to have a prototype sasquatch warning sign designed.

The task fell into the capable hands of Graphics Production Technician Kathy Macovichuk at HQ. Over the course of a lunch hour, Kathy was able to produce a stunning sasquatch silhouette that readily met with Jennifer Hardy's approval.

While the sasquatch warning sign is not yet part of the ministry's official wildlife warning sign inventory, you can rest assured that should sasquatches start crossing provincial highways with more regularity, the ministry is ready to protect them. In the meantime, if you happen to take a really good sasquatch photo, please send it to me. I have a T-shirt with an incredible sasquatch warning sign design on it for the best photo I receive. ♦

An official ministry sasquatch crossing sign has been designed and is ready for manufacturing and posting when needed.

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Climate Action Program

Soaking up Some Solar Power for DriveBC

Submitted by Maggie Malek, Climate Action Program

Highway camera images on the DriveBC website are a great resource for all highway users wanting to check road conditions before travelling in the province.

From a design and installation standpoint, most of these cameras are quite simple – needing only a power source, cellular coverage to transmit the image, and proper infrastructure to hold the camera up. But what happens when a camera needs to be placed in a remote location, with no power source, no cellular coverage, and variable weather conditions? Such is the challenge for the Radio and Electronics group of the Construction and Maintenance Branch, who have designed a controller for a new highway camera being installed at the Blueberry-Paulson Summit, near Castlegar. The group are facing this challenge with "green" in mind, for a practical and efficient solution to their power needs.

Radio and Electronics has a lot of experience with using solar power for their remote radio repeater sites, which provide radio service to ministry and maintenance contractor staff throughout the province. So the group was able to design their Highway Camera Controller for optimal energy efficiency. The efficiency is achieved, not only by the solar power sourcing, but also by the device itself. For example, while a camera connected to the grid is constantly using energy, for either the Illuminator, which is on all night, or for the climate controller, which keeps the temperature within the camera at a constant 20°C, the new solar-powered camera will only operate the devices needed, for a specific amount of time.

This means that instead of the infrared Illuminator running all night, it only lights up for the time required to take the photo. Similarly, the climate controller will run the heater or fan when necessary. To ensure a steady power supply, even if the solar panel were to be covered with snow, the panel is storing its energy in a 12-volt battery system. The battery voltage goes through a regulator module before it is distributed to all the devices in the system. This ensures each device receives reliable power. When an image is taken, it's transmitted using spread spectrum radios to a mountaintop radio repeater with cell coverage, and is uploaded to the DriveBC site.

This super-efficient and low power camera is a ministry first, and is now being field tested on Vancouver Island before being moved to its permanent home on the Blueberry-Paulson Summit. Its many features show us how advantageous green technology can be. ♦

Solar powered web camera at the test site on Vancouver Island.

Climate Action Program Recommended Read

Submitted by Maggie Malek, Climate Action Program

Want to take advantage of solar power in your home? Whether you're looking to save on your energy costs by adding a few solar components, or you want to build a solar-powered house from the ground up, *Solar Power Your Home For Dummies* takes the mystery out of this energy source and shows you how to put it to work for you!

This friendly, hands-on guide, written by Rik deGunther, is packed with tips for making your home more energy-efficient though solar power – and helping the planet at the same time. You'll see how to survey your home to determine your current household energy efficiency, and evaluate where solar power would best benefit you. ♦

Green Ideas Spark!

Submitted by Maggie Malek, Climate Action Program

Last summer, Cariboo District Area Manager Terry Murphy and his summer students recognized a recycling opportunity at provincial highway safety rest areas.

With no recycling bins for cans or bottles, recyclable containers were either being thrown out or placed beside the waste receptacle. Terry and the students thought, "Why not introduce recycling bins to help the environment and garner funds for rest area management?"

Terry shared the idea on the Spark website and it is now being implemented at specific, frequently visited rest areas. (Watch the Spark Exposed video for more on Terry's idea)

Terry's idea reminds us of the importance of recycling, to reduce greenhouse gases and conserve resources, energy and space. If everyone in B.C. recycled their beverage containers, the result would be the equivalent of 27,000 cars taken off B.C.'s roads for a year; the energy saved would light 41,000 homes for a year in B.C.; and we could eliminate about 126,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent being released into B.C.'s atmosphere.

Preventing those cans and bottles from reaching our landfills helps keep our province clean and green. We thank Terry and his team for demonstrating that green ideas don't have to be complex to make a difference. ♦

Terry Murphy with one of the new recycling containers at a highway rest area.

Green Driving Tips

Watch your speed

You can save fuel simply by monitoring your speed. When on the highway (and driving according to the conditions and posted speed limit, of course) travelling between 90 km/h and 100 km/h can reduce fuel consumption by up to 30 per cent.

Stop Idling

If you are idling for 10 seconds or longer, it's better to turn your engine off. Forty-five seconds of idling uses about the same amount of fuel it takes to drive a kilometre. There's no sense in wasting gas when you're not even moving.

Kamloops "Green Group" Plants Trees for Tomorrow

Submitted by Tracy LeClair, District Development Technician

The Kamloops Going Green Group has actively pursued ways to educate and encourage Kamloops employees to be environmentally conscious. In turn, we are always trying to plan fun and exciting events to encourage staff to reduce their carbon footprint and lead healthy lives.

For the first time ever, in lieu of Earth Day on April 22, the Going Green Group organized a tree planting event. The event was co-ordinated with the City of Kamloops' Trees for Tomorrow Program. The city provided us with 30 mixed deciduous trees to plant at a local park.

On May 6, 10 people participated and within an hour we had all the trees planted and watered. Planting the trees was a lot of work, but it was well worth the effort! ♦

Tree planters Elaine Shibata, Tracy LeClair, Dave Retzer, Sue Pare, Alan Schmidt, Joey Alain, Graeme Cross, Deb Luison and Bonnie Cameron. (Lawrence Barichello was missing for the photo).

Competitions and Community Work Celebrate Public Service Week

Submitted by Samantha Eburne, Executive Coordinator

Public Service Week was held June 15 to 19, and there were many events to celebrate the contributions and hard work that public service employees provide throughout the year.

There were friendly competitions held across the ministry, including the Inaugural Popsicle Stick Bridge Building Competition, a golf tournament, Wii Olympics, cribbage tournaments and a dose of skill-testing brain-teaser questions.

There was even some healthy competition across ministries with the Inaugural Road Hockey Tournament and an Olympic Challenge Event. The Road Warriors were dressed for ball hockey success in their Adopt A Highway fluorescent vests. With one win under their belt, they will be the team to beat next year!

The Road Warriors ball hockey team made a strong showing in fluorescent vests.

The winning bridge-building Human Resources team: (standing) Pam Merkley, Lorraine Henderson, Paul Squires and Tracy Houser; and (sitting) Lori Wiedeman and Kimberly Newton.

A bridge begins to form, as the clock nears the deadline.

Deputy Minister Peter Milburn (left) and Chief Operating Officer Dave Byng (right) view the construction.

Barbecues and luncheons were a theme seen across the province with Saanich, Courtenay, Nelson, Thompson-Nicola, West Kootenay, Cariboo, Skeena District, Southern Interior and Northern Region offices all taking part. Ice cream socials were also a growing trend this year, with HQ and Prince George enjoying the frosty treat.

Southern Interior Region and Thompson-Nicola District staff brought plants from home and planted them in patio containers at the Kamloops office. At their barbecue, they raised $269. This money was divided in half, and given to the Canadian Cancer Society and the local food bank.

Some other offices also supported their communities by donating to the local food banks.

Along with other ministries in Cranbrook, Rocky Mountain District staff worked on a men's shelter (rebuilding wheelchair access ramp and doing a minor roof repair) and the SPCA (repairing fences, and upgrading a dog pen) and cleaned up the community forest adjacent to the city boundary.

Employees from the West Kootenay District, along with other ministries in the area, were busy keeping Kokanee Creek Provincial Park healthy by clearing invasive plants from the park.

The week's celebrations were considered to be a big success, and hopefully everyone was able to take part and enjoy an event in their region. ♦

Plunging into the watermelon eating contest for Thompson-Nicola District and Southern Interior Region employees. Paula Cousins won the event.

Natural Hazards Workshop Led by Geotech's Gord Hunter

Submitted by Leslie Elder, Senior District Development Technician

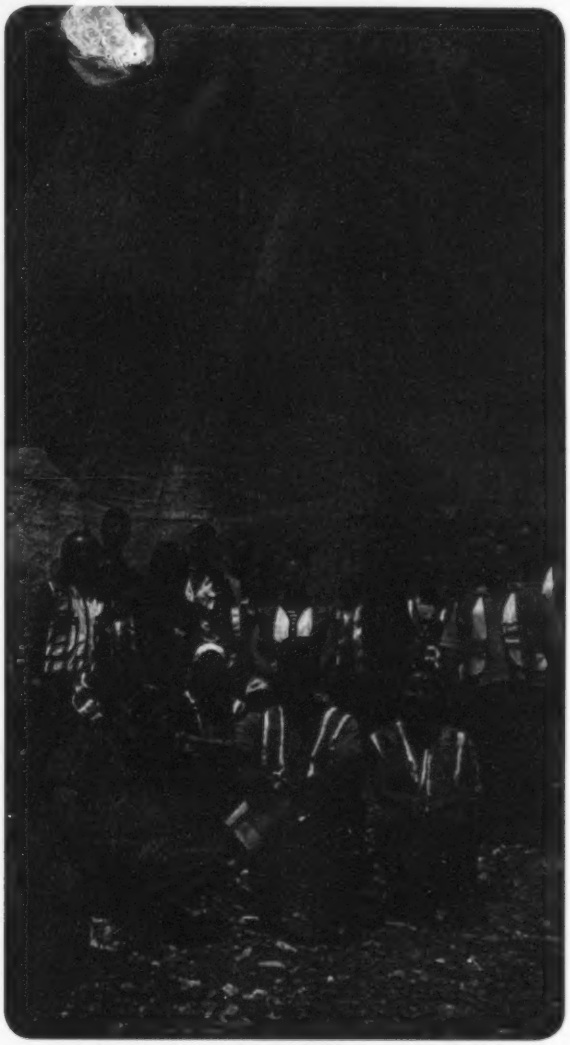
It is no surprise to anyone who has been in the ministry for any length of time, that there are a large number of experts in a variety of fields that continue to mentor and share their knowledge with the rest of us. One of those individuals is Gordon Hunter, Geotechnical Manager in the Northern Region.

Gord is responsible for an area of the province that holds its own geotechnical challenges, whether it be gravel sources for projects, landslides that threaten our highway infrastructure or assisting any number of business units in decision making.

On top of his regular work with the ministry, Gord also passes his expertise along to students at the University of Northern British Columbia, in Prince George. As if that isn't enough, he is always willing to facilitate workshops, one of which took place in late May, in the Cranbrook area of the Rocky Mountain District.

The Rocky Mountain and West Kootenay Districts co-hosted a two-day natural hazard workshop that was attended by about 20 people from across the Southern Interior Region.

Participants were able to visit rockfall sites, and alluvial fan areas in the Dutch Creek area.



The group at the base of the HooDoos, along Highway 93/95, at Dutch Creek. Gord Hunter is in the forefront, holding a map.

Gord Hunter in Dutch Creek, surveying the waterway.

A visit to a large golf course/residential development outside Cranbrook, known as Shadow Mountain, was a great place to witness the use of extensive retaining wall structures, and discuss the appropriate gravel materials for road building.

Afterwards, there was a stop in Canal Flats where everyone saw how a slow moving landslide can wreak havoc on residential foundations.

After enjoying a picnic lunch along the shore of Columbia Lake, the final stop in the field trip was a local rural subdivision, known as Rushmere, along the west side of Windermere Lake.

This was the highlight of the day. The regional district was installing a new community water system for residents of the area.

The works required open excavation of the right of way, including the road. What happens when water and silting soils mix? You get a roadbed that is reminiscent of those water beds some of us had in the 1980s!

We would like to send a great big thanks to Gord for taking time out of his busy life to make the workshop a success!

Without individuals like Gord willingly sharing their knowledge and experiences with others, our ministry would not be what it is – a great place to work! ♦

The Provincial Transit Plan

Come Ride with Us…And Take A Look Back!

Submitted by Leyland Cecco, Co-op Employee

In the last issue of the Road Runner, the Transit Branch updated you on a "Lunch and Learn" video series designed to further educate ministry staff in a variety of transit-related areas. Short documentaries were screened, highlighting transit successes throughout the world.

Inspired by innovations from Bogota to Seoul, it's time for us to look back at the progress the Transit Branch has made over the year, and see just how much of the Provincial Transit Plan has become a reality.

Federal Funding

Key developments in the last year revolved around discussions between the provincial and federal governments. Through negotiations, the ministry was able to secure $556 million in federal contributions to aid in the delivery of the projects outlined in the Transit Plan. Highlights include:

- An additional $350 million from the Building Canada Fund to further develop the Evergreen Line.

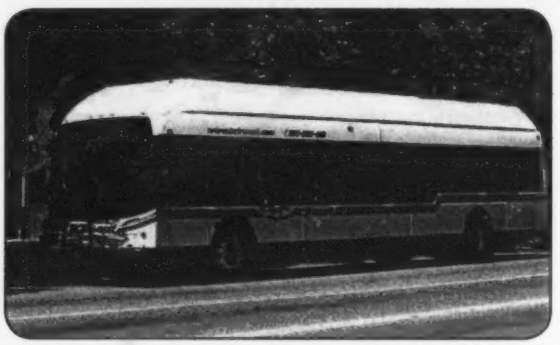
- $118.3 million for several major transit projects, such as Expo Line Station upgrades, additional SkyTrain cars, improvements to the West Coast Express, and a significant investment in transit security.

- $24 million from the Stimulus Fund for transit infrastructure projects.

These cost-sharing agreements are a key part of the transit vision.

Rapid Transit

Rapid transit projects, perhaps the most visible feature of the Transit Plan, received a flurry of federal and provincial funding agreements. The Surrey Expansion, Evergreen, Expo and UBC Lines all received sizeable financial commitments, but the progress was more than just finance related. An Evergreen Line project office was opened, and this step moves us closer to the start of construction. The planning and development stages of these projects also saw progress, reflecting the dedicated work of ministry employees.



New hydrogen cell buses will be operating in time for the 2010 Olympics.

RapidBus

In Kelowna, the Transit Branch is working alongside BC Transit, the City of Kelowna, and the federal government to deliver a series of projects including improvements to Highway 97, bus maintenance terminal design, transit route planning and phased implementation of RapidBus service between Westbank and the UBC Okanagan campus.

Highway 99 RapidBus is investing in shoulder lanes to accommodate buses, as well as transit signal priority measures that will improve transit service between White Rock and Richmond. This project will give enhanced linkages to the Canada Line when it opens on Labour Day 2009.

Expanding the Fleet

During the year, steps were taken to increase the number of buses throughout the province. Our branch partnered with BC Transit to finance the purchase of new buses, while also providing funds to TransLink to further increase the capacity of its service fleet.

The West Coast Express also received financial support from the federal and provincial government, which will go toward the additional cars and station upgrades.

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Come Ride with Us...And Take A Look Back!

...continued from Page 20

In anticipation of the 2010 Olympics, BC Transit worked in tandem with the Transit Branch to acquire 20 hydrogen fuel cell buses. These buses, along with a hydrogen fuelling infrastructure, will be in place to expand the public transit network in Whistler.

Transit Rider Security

In a move to further bolster public transit rider comfort and safety, the Province and the Federal Government united with TransLink to provide $100 million in funding for the delivery of a faregate and Smartcard system. These will contribute to an improved transit experience for all transit users in Metro Vancouver.

Other Projects (Worth Mentioning!)

The Transit Branch has also worked hard to enhance service in communities outside Metro Vancouver.

Vernon, Kamloops and Kelowna all received provincial and federal contributions to construct new maintenance buildings, while the Sunshine Coast received financial support for bus pullouts and safety improvements.

We're also studying the potential for rapid transit services in both the Fraser Valley and along Southern Vancouver Island. The results of these studies will help planners design smart transportation solutions and determine the best possible option to meet the needs of all transit users. It's clear that this year has been busy, and the visions outlined in the Transit Plan are becoming a reality for British Columbians. Each step leads us closer toward the goal of becoming a world leader in transit. ♦

Transit Teasers:

1) How can a bus driver go up a one-way road the wrong way without breaking the law?

2) There are seven people on a bus. Each person has seven backpacks. In each backpack, there are seven big cats. For every big cat there are seven little cats. How many legs are there in the bus?

Answers

1. The bus driver is walking
2. 10,990

Rocky Mountain Masters TRIM Challenge

Submitted by Leslie Elder, Sr. District Development Technician

Are you TRIM challenged? I know I was (am) as were a lot of staff in our district. In order to improve everyone's knowledge and skill level in using TRIM (which stands for Total Records Information Management), we decided to challenge all Rocky Mountain District staff to a team-focused contest.

Having a few competitive individuals in our office made this event quite interesting. Three teams, headed up by administrative staff that were knowledgeable with the ins and outs of TRIM, had four weeks to get TRIMming!

Several individuals took on the challenge with vigour and used this opportunity to clean up those drives prior to the Vista refresh!

Incentives were given for first and second place, with the real incentive being to NOT be on the losing team. Those people will be forever remembered in the archives with a group photo displaying their TRIM dunce caps!

As a special mention, one of the winning team members, District Development Technician Marlyn Marshall, was successful in TRIMming over 800 files – way to go TRIM Master Marlyn! Considering Marlyn was one of the holdouts in using TRIM, she really took on the challenge and proved to everyone that, "If I can do it, so can you!!"

With a competitive district manager like Jack Bennetto, we are now preparing for the bigger challenge of taking on the other districts in the Southern Interior Region. Are you ready to challenge the TRIM Masters? ♦

Marlyn Marshall reaps the rewards of her TRIM performance.

First Annual May Day Challenge

Submitted by Elaine Vale, Manager of CVSE Policy Initiatives

On May 12 and 13, CVSE Headquarters staff participated in the inaugural May Day Challenge. Teams spent their lunch hour racing through Downtown Victoria answering questions to clues, and then sprinted back to the office to solve the final puzzle.

There was some plotting, deception, hair pulling, a few red faces and a lot of laughs.

Teams were awarded prizes for:

Best Team Name:
CVSE Skullbusters

Best Costume:
Fiddle-Footed Five, with their cowboy theme

Best Picture:
Red Road Runners

Grand Prize:
May Day Marauders, who solved the 14 clues and unscrambled the final puzzle in a time of 56 minutes and 53 seconds.

Employees familiar with Headquarters' offices might know where the Red Road Runners' picture was taken, by reading the following clue given to the team.

"Is there a wine bottle big enough for that corkscrew? You know the one...you pass by it every day to come into the office. Many see it as art, others have no clue. Gather together and smile and say cheese!!!"

If you guessed the four-storey high, spiral-shaped metal artwork in the courtyard at 940 Blanshard, in Victoria, you should enter next year's May Day Challenge for a chance to win the cup! ♦

Grand prize winners were the May Day Marauders: Danielle MacDonald, Jackie Hucal, Greg Sutton, Roberta Murchie and Dale Dickson.

Red Road Runners Mark Wong, Rebecca Penner, Brian Kangas, Nancy Fairs-Natland and Jan Reinelt follow the clue and the command to have a photo taken of them by the metal sculpture.

Long Service Saluted in Construction and Maintenance

Submitted by Bobbie Mitchell, Director's Secretary

Construction and Maintenance Branch Director Rodney Chapman recently presented long-service pins at a special recognition event.

Rodney shared his personal knowledge of each employee, gave details of their work history, and related some humorous stories about some of the longer-serving members of staff. He complimented each branch member personally, highlighting their work ethic, enthusiasm, and dedication to their jobs and the ministry. Pins were awarded for a range of five to 35 years of total provincial government service (not just our ministry). When the starting date of the 35-year recipient was announced, it was discovered that one of the newest staff members would have been only a year old at that time. This brought some good natured laughter.

A wide range of ages, abilities and experiences were well represented by the staff receiving pins. Congratulations to Reg Fredrickson, Suzanne Lim, Diane Marson, Kirsten Meyer, Bobbie Mitchell, Scot Mortimer, Jenny Pleice, Mark Pratt, Soo Lian Reid and Patti Sandham, who were recognized at this event. ♦

Avalanche Systems Technician Patti Sandham displays her 35-year pin, while Administrative Records Clerk Tanya Levy raises a single finger to show how old she was when Patti joined the B.C. public service.

Thanks to Our Supporters!

Submitted by Don Allenby, Commercial Vehicle Inspector

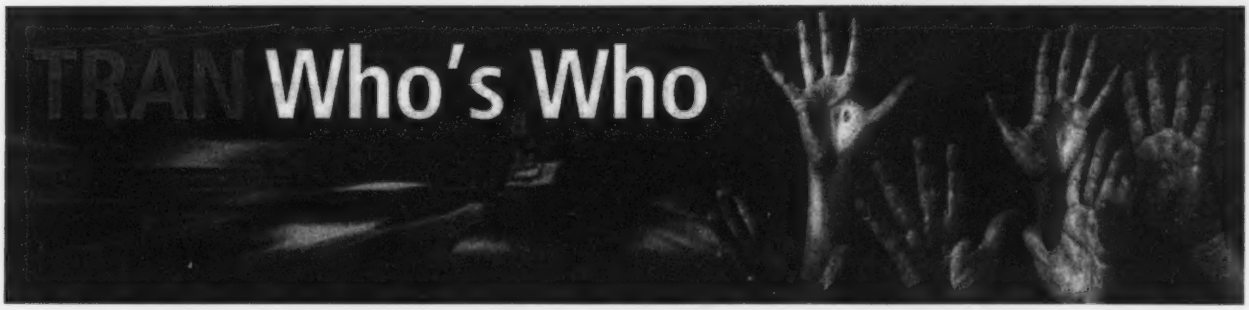
A super-size thank you to ministry employees who supported the Scotia Bank Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Walk, which took place in April, in Kamloops and around the province.

My wife Kathy, who lives with MS, is the team captain for the Spirit Walkers. Together, she and I raised $1,200, which went toward the team's total of $5,300. In the Kamloops area, more than $73,000 was raised. A large percentage of those funds stay within communities to help support those living with MS.

Kathy takes an assertive and active approach to living with MS. Her philosophy is, "I have MS, MS does not have me."

Thanks to everyone in the Thompson Nicola District and Southern Interior Region offices, and out at the CVSE inspection stations, who gave to this cause. Come join the team next year! ♦

Don Allenby (far left) and his wife Kathy (far right) with the Spirit Walkers.



Leo Belanger Digs Deep to Ensure Safe Roads

Submitted by Heather Lilburn, Commercial Transport Inspector

Leo Belanger is passionate about enforcement in the high-accident area he watches over.

The convergence of three arterial highways in the Fraser Valley is a place for close attention. Between the dynamics of Highways 1, 5 and 7 coming together, and the sometimes hurried behaviours of motorists travelling to and from the Lower Mainland, there have been some deadly crashes.

Alongside the RCMP's Fraser Valley Traffic Services, is a CVSE inspector who has taken these stretches of highway to be his specific on-duty passion.

An enforcement juggernaut, Leo Belanger is a full service shop. Completely committed to reducing crash rates within his area, he continuously, at all hours, constantly reiterates what we in CVSE know to be true – there is a strong correlation between dangerous driving habits, driver fatigue and neglected mechanics. Over the course of pulling over hundreds of speeding commercial drivers, Leo has dug deep into each situation, and conclusively learned that a speeding driver very frequently will also have issues with logbook violations and vehicle maintenance.

Unconcerned with popularity, he is unshakably focused on his directives. So if you find yourself driving anywhere within 80 kilometres of Chilliwack, you can do so with a little more confidence. Not because you know that Leo is on the job, but because at the end of the day, the truckers do. ♦

More Ministry Employees Appear on @Work

Submitted by Nancy McLeod, Road Runner Editor

Mike Hovde

You never know who you'll see on the @Work provincial employee Intranet site! Ministry employees and their work continue to crop up regularly. Since last Employees @ Work article, in the March 2008 *Road Runner*, employees doing a variety of jobs and projects have been featured from a number of angles. Find what they have to say, by entering their names in the search box in the upper right hand corner of the @Work site.

Short Videos:

- Terry Murphy – recycling at rest areas
- Grant Lachmuth – William R. Bennett Bridge
- Dave Solberg – District Development Tech
- Jacques Dupas – succession planning
- Heather Lilburn – commercial transport inspection
- Doreen McAllister – Vehicle Inspection Station Supervisor
- Kim Kovacs and Tracy LeClair – integrating new hires
- Dave Sabyan – Senior Area Vehicle Inspector
- Pam Merkley – Natural Resource Sector Development Showcase

Written Features:

- Peter Milburn – Deputy Minister Profile
- Mike Hovde – 32-year career, in nine communities
- Three Generations of Lachmuths – Erik, Grant and Al Lachmuth have all had careers with the ministry
- Reg Faubert – leading the Policy Community of Practice Group ♦

2009 Engineers in Training

Submitted by Lorraine Henderson, A/Manager, HR Planning and Development

As a new member of the Human Resources Branch, my first task was to start sifting through 250 resumes for some stellar up and coming engineers. Considering my lack of knowledge about engineering, I realized I needed help – and fast!

Chief Engineer Dirk Nyland came to my rescue. Dirk answered the simplest questions with his own brand of humour, and of course Chantelle Gergley, on a temporary appointment as a District Operations Manager, was always just a phone call away. Loaded with newfound knowledge, I started to slog my way through the pile of paper that seemed mountains high. Through much reading, learning and numerous meetings with Dirk, I feel we've hired some outstanding engineers and I'm excited to introduce them to you.

Arvin Bahrabadi

Arvin Bahrabadi – A recent graduate from the University of British Columbia, Arvin received his bachelor's degree as an integrated engineer. I didn't know what an integrated engineer was, but Arvin made sure to clarify the program for me, seeking me out at information sessions and career fairs.

His persistence and enthusiasm paid off! This, along with his experience working as a co-op student at Peter Kiewit Sons Co., was the driving force behind his successful selection as a district Engineer in Training (EIT) working out of Nanaimo.

Geoffrey Chum – Geoffrey hails from Missouri City, Texas, and will be joining the Evergreen Line Project at the end of July. Born and raised in Burnaby, Geoffrey is eager to return to the Lower Mainland and bring along his skills from working with Houston Metro on their light rail system. Majoring in civil engineering with a transportation focus, Geoffrey obtained both his bachelor's and master's degrees from Texas A&M University, in College Station, Texas.

Joseph Adom – Suitcase in hand, Joseph moved from Ottawa to join the team at the Gateway/Port Mann Highway 1 project. Graduating with his civil engineering degree, Joseph applied his past construction experience to his role as an engineering assistant, when he worked as a co-op employee for the City of Ottawa's Public Works Services. He's been fascinated by bridges since the age of 12 and brings that enthusiasm to his new role.

Leanne Garand

Leanne Garand – Now that Leanne has had some time for travelling around Ontario and Quebec, she is ready for her career to be off and running! After transferring her Engineering Design and Drafting Technology Diploma from Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, to the civil engineering program at Thunder Bay's Lakehead University, Leanne was the only student to complete her degree in two years. She also gained some co-op experience in Edmonton, with the Roads Department of UMA Engineering Ltd. Leanne will be working on the Port Mann Bridge project.

Karamjeet Deogan – Karamjeet has been working with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure as a TELP for the past year. Successful in his bid to join the EIT program, Karamjeet was almost as excited about winning the position, as he was with the notion that he will no longer have to commute to Victoria, from Delta.

With both bachelor's and master's degrees from India, Karamjeet also has more than three years experience plus co-op work, to bring to the South Fraser Perimeter Road project.

Banafsheh Rahmani – Through her co-op projects, Banafsheh had the opportunity to work alongside many ministry employees who sold her on working for the ministry in our EIT program. She witnessed great teamwork, heard about the benefits and various programs, and decided she wanted to be a part of the fun! Banafsheh also graduated from the University of British Columbia's integrated engineering program. Spending over a year with Opus International Consultants Ltd. has laid the groundwork for Banafsheh to have a successful career with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure – starting in Burnaby's Traffic Branch.

Nick Sandhu – When reading an assignment that Nick had written as part of the hiring process, I realized that he had witnessed transportation issues that many of us will never see. His article was about the challenges of transportation in New Delhi, India. If the pictures were anything to go by, I think Nick will be relieved that we won't be dealing with the same issues in B.C. Working three terms as a co-op student with the City of Surrey, and one with PCL Constructors Westcoast Inc., helped Nick to realize that he wanted to grow his career in public service. Starting in Burnaby as a Bridge Engineer will provide Nick with the opportunity to reach his career goals.

Carl Wong

Carl Wong – Carl brings three years of experience, most recently with Glotman-Simpson Group of Companies, to our ministry. He has had the opportunity to see a few different sides to engineering. Eager to try different projects on for size, Carl is starting out in bridge engineering. One of the attractions to the EIT program for Carl was the opportunity to move around the province for his various rotations. Fort Nelson, anyone? ♦

Ever Heard of a Sweet Spot?

Submitted by Gail Duffy, Contract Administrator

Southern Interior Region has a sweet spot – actually it's Sweet Spot Cupcakes – owned and operated by our own Teresa Bepple.

Teresa is a Financial Analyst in Corporate Services who quite recently decided to make a change – to live out her dream of making cupcakes. She now works three days a week with the ministry and three days a week at her new spot in downtown Kamloops.

Her cupcakes are all homemade with real butter and real cream, and the finishing touch is the immaculate and imaginative decoration on the top. You can go in and buy one or a dozen – if you need more she can do it. Recently she received 10 bookings for weddings. She's an amazing and talented woman!

The staff in our offices were all participants in Teresa's earlier experiments of what tasted good, looked good and what would be most popular.

In spite of us each gaining a pound or two, we were a very willing group and are so thrilled to have been a small part of her success. Come to think of it, lately she doesn't bring in many samples for us – guess we'll have to remind her about that...

As CEO of her own company, Teresa is truly an entrepreneur, and we're very proud of her hard work and accomplishments. Congratulations Teresa and good luck in your future sales! ♦

Teresa offers cupcakes to her taste-testing co-workers Gail Duffy and Cheryl Scott.

Snow to Surf Racers Take on Multiple Challenges

Submitted by Leeanne Jones, Project Technician, Climate Action Program

The race is on and they're off! On April 19, under snowy skies, the Climate Action Program, Human Resources Branch and some family members joined forces to become team "Emissions Impossible," for the Snow to Surf relay race at Mt. Washington, on Vancouver Island.

The Snow to Surf race consisted of eight segments done by nine people: alpine skiing, Kevin Volk; cross-country skiing, Ian Pilkington; first runner, Erin Moxon; second runner, Michael Jones (my brother visiting from PEI); mountain biking, Pam Merkley; kayaking, Stephen Friesen (Erin's other half); road biking, Erin Moxon; canoeing, Nathan Popp and I (Leeanne Jones). As you notice, Erin did two portions of the race which put us in a special category called "Missing Members."

It was an exciting and fun race. Even though we couldn't really watch each team member, the stories were great to hear afterward. Before the race, all we heard about was how hard it is to run uphill in ski boots. I don't think Kevin knew this before volunteering for the alpine skiing, but he survived, and even stayed near the head of the pack. Ian passed a whole lot of people in his segment of the cross country ski. Pam Merkley was one of the few women in the race to tackle the very technical mountain bike portion and I hear she did quite the "Super Man"! This is what we called her manoeuvre, which sounded like Pam flying skyward into the air, hands over her head, minus bike and red cape.

Erin Moxon did two portions of the race and couldn't walk for the next six days. She did the first downhill six-kilometre run on pavement, followed by the 30-kilometre road bike portion an hour later. Stephen ended up paddling the sea kayak portion in Comox Lake with no rudder because he took off from the shore so fast there wasn't time to put it down for him. He still finished in 40 minutes. Michael did the second running stretch that was partially on pavement and partially on a gravel trail (which for him, never seemed to end!).

The final leg of the race was by canoe from Courtenay Air Park to Comox Marina Park, an epic journey that took Nathan and me over an hour and a half to complete. After we launched the canoe, we thought it would be smooth sailing all the way to the finish line... 'til we reached the open ocean and were hit head on with high winds and whitecaps. The weather got so bad that the Coast Guard refused to allow the rest of the canoes to launch!

Front row: Erin Moxon, Pam Merkley, Leeanne Jones and Nathan Popp (with daughter Naema). Back row: Stephen Friesen, Ian Pilkington and Michael Jones. Missing: Kevin Volk.

There was some great storytelling in the refreshment tent after the race, as we admired the winning teams who received huge chocolate medals. "Emissions Impossible" might not have finished first in the race but we did have a blast doing it. Oh wait... remember the special category we were in? We did finish first in the "Missing Members" category, and 125th overall, with a time of 5:50:55! Hope to see you all there next year! ♦

Big Bike – Family Members Join Coneheads to Raise Cash

Submitted by Loretta Carlson, Development Approvals Assistant

The Heart and Stroke Foundation has sent out a big thank you to everyone who participated and/or donated in the Big Bike event. On May 4, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's team from New Westminster and Burnaby, the Coneheads, raised $3,479 for this year's event. Way to go team!

For Pat Thomas, of the South Coast Regional Office, the Big Bike is a family affair. This is the second time Pat's sister Gloria Brown and her mom Edna Bowden have joined the ride. Pat says, "Mom always has a great time and is looking forward to next year."

The Coneheads would like to send a special thank you to their Captain, Lorna Leslie. ♦

Pat Thomas (centre) with her sister Gloria Brown (left) and mother Edna Bowden (right).

Big Bike – Southern Interior Highway Wheelers Pedal through Kamloops

Crystal Chenier, Finance and Administration Clerk

Our team of high-spirited Highway Wheelers hit the streets of Kamloops, on May 28, and we pedaled our hearts out on the Big Bike! We had a goal of $3,000, and we raised $4,247. We thank everyone so much who generously pledged our riders.

Harvey Nelson was the top fundraiser, with $501. Way to go Harvey! We had a full bike – 29 riders in all. I have been riding the bike for two years now. My husband had a heart attack two years ago, so this has a lot of meaning for me. Fortunately, he is now doing very well.

We are making this an annual event in the South Interior Region. Thanks to all! ♦

The energetic Highway Wheelers get set for their Big Bike ride.

Big Bike – Ministries Team up in Williams Lake

Submitted by Margie Henley, District Operations Technician

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure teamed up with the Ministry of Environment to ride the Big Bike for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Our fundraising and pledges totalled $1,911. The Big Bike was in Williams Lake for two days. Out of 16 teams, nine were public service employees (provincial, municipal and federal). This demonstrated that public sector employees know "how to put their heart" into a great event for an organization that provides funding for research, education and public awareness of heart disease.

Donations are still coming in, but at last count, Williams Lake raised $22,000. This shows how different teams can come from different backgrounds but have the same goal – to give from the heart for the heart! ♦

Employees at Williams Lake teamed up with Ministry of Environment staff to become the Enviro Riders.

Big Bike – HQ's Big Bikers Raise Eyebrows and Funds

Submitted by Monique Meek, Maintenance Contracts Coordinator

On June 11, the Big Bike came to Victoria, and the gang at HQ was quick to hop aboard. We rode as the Highwaymen, also known as Brenda's Bikers, and started our journey from the Parliament Buildings.

Dressed as "tacky tourists," we attracted attention from the many out-of-towners visiting the inner harbour.

Some of the pre-ride warm-up games included sack races and hula hoop. Yongmei Chen impressed everyone with her excellent hula-hoop skills. Greg Gilks and Reg Fredrickson teamed up to attempt the challenging two-person hula hoop.

As a team we raised just over $4,500! Tracy Houser was the biggest fundraiser, at $565. The other top fundraisers were Jenny Pleice ($510) myself ($505) and Nancy Merston ($500).

Our riders: Nancy Bain, Karen Brown, Sandra Carroll, Yongmei Chen, Samantha Eburne, Lindsey Fanning, Reg Fredrickson, Dianne Froese, Jerry Froese, Greg Gilks, Gislene Guenard, Donna Halliday, Kirk Handrahan, Lorraine Henderson, Tracy Houser, Shelley Keddy, Liz Kenny, Tanya Levy, Patricia MacDonald, Dawn Major, Monique Meek (team captain), Nancy Merston, Bobbie Mitchell, Sue Pauwels, Jenny Pleice, Shaun Prodanuk, Vina Sianen, Paul Squires, Cindi Trowbridge and Marion Wilkie. ♦

HQ's Big Bike riders pedal through the streets of Victoria.

Juvenile Diabetes – A Fundraising Fairy Tale

Submitted by Gail Duffy, Contract Administrator

Once upon a time there was a Regional Manager of Corporate Services named Paula Cousins. Her presence was requested to attend a fundraiser event for Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, but Paula was unable to go. So she called upon the people of her land to arrange a substitute to attend this very important event.

So...as this story goes...Gail Duffy (that's me) attended the Kick-off Fundraising Breakfast in Paula's absence on Feb. 18, at 7 a.m. I don't really eat breakfast but I did that day and I was happy to be the replacement guest.

One of the speakers was Bert Braybrook, Director with Telus. He gave a very insightful speech about the foundation and the three-year partnership Telus has with them. In 2008, more than 3,000 Telus team members, friends and family across Canada participated in the 2008 Telus Walk to Cure Diabetes.

Guest speaker Sara Schreiner, accompanied by her daughter Mikayla (who is the poster child for the research foundation) told her moving story of what life is like for them, as Mikayla was born with Juvenile Diabetes. She spoke of their challenges and difficulties and it was very motivating to me. Previous to this day, I had not known that this disease was so prevalent and never considered how it affects the lives of those who have it and their families. I do now.

Upon my return to our land, I was excited to advise Miss Paula of my findings – I told her about the charming Bert Braybrook, how Sara Schreiner and her daughter Mikayla were so amazing, and I suggested we put together our own Walk to Cure Diabetes team.

She was delighted too, and that's how the Transportation Highway Rollers came to be.

We held a hotdog and bake sale, sold 50/50 tickets, solicited pledges and put together a total of $1,157.5[illegible]. Then, on June 7, we gathered in Kamloops' Riverside Park to participate in the fundraising walk, and presented our contribution toward this very needful and appreciative organization.

Doers of good deeds (back row): Paula Cousins (holding her son Sawyer) Gail Duffy, Randy Lloyd, Brian Lloyd and Lois Sharun; and (front row): Cheryl Scott, Louise Braybrook, Crystal Chenier, Jeanne Reeves and Bonnie Fadden.

And the people in our land cheered, applauded and were very happy.

The End ♦

MoT Road Runners Boogie the Bridge in Kamloops

Submitted by Kathryn Weicker, Transportation Planning Engineer

On Saturday, April 25, several ministry staff and family members were among the 2,015 runners and walkers that braved the cool spring weather to support the Kamloops Early Language and Literacy Initiative, in the annual Boogie the Bridge Walk/Run/Stroll Fundraiser. All participants successfully completed the race, with several individuals setting personal records.

The event raised over $100,000 for the local charity. A big thanks goes to all Boogies participants and we look forward to entering a corporate team again next year.

5K Run

Kathryn Weicker
Jeanne Reeves
Susan Randle
Bonnie Cameron
Ty Kolle Cameron

12K Run

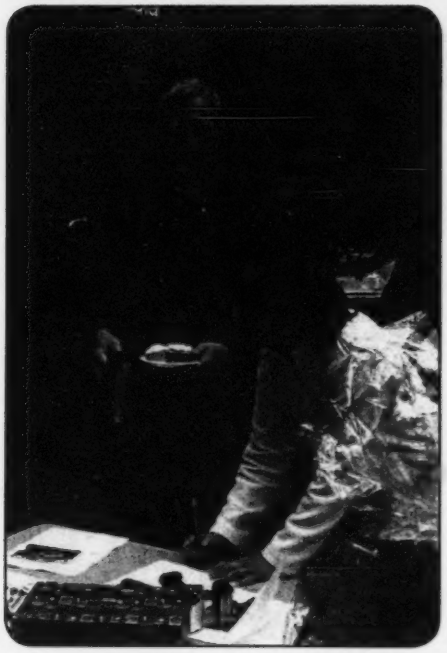
David Retzer
Kevin Weicker
Ed Wnuk
Michael Pearson
Carrie Stiles-Freeman
Grant Irvine
Tom Freeman (pushing daughter Aleah) ♦

MoT Road Runners: David Retzer, Kevin Weicker, Kathryn Weicker, Ed Wnuk, Jeanne Reeves, Michael Pearson, Carrie Stiles-Freeman (with daughter Aleah), Susan Randle, Bonnie Cameron, Grant Irvine, Ty Kolle Cameron and Tom Freeman.

Cupcakes for a Cause

Submitted by Megan Toop, Financial and Administrative Assistant

When Bev Propp, of Headquarters' Engineering Branch, announced she would be travelling to Haiti in May, to volunteer with the non-profit organization Friends of the Children of Haiti, staff members expressed their interest in assisting Bev with the cost of her trip.



Bev Propp signs up a cupcake-laden Ed Miska for the draw.

Aside from funding the cost of travel entirely on her own, as a volunteer, Bev was also provided with a list of supplies she would be required to bring along with her on her trip. Articles included toiletries, infant formula, and items such as salt, which is used to treat skin ailments.

The organization's volunteer-run clinic is open for only a couple of weeks every few months.

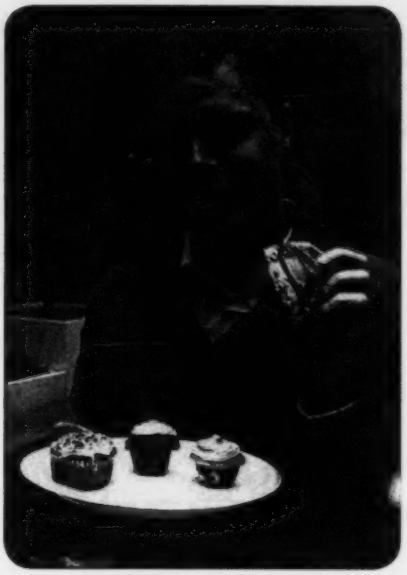
As many Haitians cannot afford the medical treatments provided by hospitals, individuals, some with horrible wounds, travel to the clinic by foot and line up for hours hoping to see the volunteers. According to Bev, many say that standing in line is better than visiting the hospital.

Bev's generosity could not be ignored and Engineering Branch staff wanted to come up with a way to raise money to help assist Bev's admirable efforts. And what better way to drum up support than with cupcakes?

A group of approximately 12 bakers offered to donate their sweet confections to the cupcake fundraiser. Bakers were asked to be creative and to include original descriptions with their goodies. The morning of the fundraiser, cupcakes began to stack up in a designated boardroom, and the aroma was mouth-watering.

The sale itself was set up in the outside courtyard and ready to begin at 10 a.m., just in time to catch staff heading in and out of the building on coffee break. The tables were adorned with a rainbow of irresistible cupcakes, and the line-up began to grow as people awaited a welcome sugar fix.

It was estimated that there were approximately 40 dozen cupcakes in total for sale. Before long, the line-up had begun to snake around the courtyard and people were heading into the building juggling plates of half a dozen sticky cupcakes.



Kevin House shows off a highways-themed treat. Is that the William R. Bennett Bridge?

By 10:30 a.m., every single cupcake had been sold. Those arriving late were told that they were out of luck.

The cupcake sale was a tremendous success!

In 30 minutes, approximately four-hundred dollars had been raised to assist Bev with her trip to Haiti.

While she was away, Bev sent us emails about the joy she experienced helping those in need, and the heartache involved when, for some, it was too late.

Bev is undeniably changed by her experiences, and will even be sponsoring two children at $25 a month each.

Thank you to everyone who contributed by baking or buying cupcakes to support Bev and this worthy cause!

For more details about Bev Propp's volunteer work in Haiti, see Page 31. ♦

Cupcake sales leaders Bobbie Mitchell, Megan Toop and Sandra Weaver.

Employee Delivers Humanitarian Care in Haiti

Submitted by Bev Propp, RISP Consultant Registry Administrator

Bev Propp, who works with the Engineering Branch in HQ, volunteered on a medical mission in Haiti, from May 8 to 24. Here is her story.

The mission to Haiti was incredible – both emotionally and physically. Every doctor, nurse and team member pays their way to work at the clinic provided by Friends of the Children of Haiti. Everyone had to share duties such as laundry, cleaning, making breakfast as well as assisting in medical procedures. We were up at 5 a.m. to eat and then off to work, at the clinic in Jacmel. At night we counted out prescriptions, vitamins to give out, and put medicated shampoos and other supplies into smaller bottles.

Over the two-week mission, we saw over 3,000 people. All were weighed, had blood pressure checked, and had temperature and blood and urine tests done. Once this was complete, the patients went to see the doctors. Many had huge goitres – some the size of baseballs. These were caused from not having iodized salt. Many patients were brought in by ambulance, which was a wheelbarrow and someone making the sounds of a siren. People walked from the mountains and communities, then lined up outside the compound, hoping they would get treated during the clinic's 14-day operation. They waited in the field, and slept under trees when it rained, as it did most nights.

I was the only one on the team who was a "non medical person". However, as I have worked in two family practices at night, and had worked in the medical village for the Commonwealth Games in Victoria, and volunteered with Big Brothers/Sisters, I was accepted. One of the doctors I worked for was going, so I had a good reference.

I assisted doctors and nurses with medical procedures, bringing patients in from the fields, weighing patients and getting charts ready to go for each person. The children were treated for worms, scabies and open sores that had become infected. They were also given vaccinations, vitamins, fluoride, and if suffering from malnutrition, were put on peanut butter system.

Bev Propp holds a baby in Haiti, the poorest country in the Western hemisphere.

The peanut butter given out is filled with added vitamins. The kids have to bring back the container to be refilled at the next clinic, in three months. They get weighed to make sure they are putting on weight, and that the peanut butter is not sold or eaten by others.

While there, I decided to sponsor twins. With the $25 a month that I contribute for each child, they attend school, get their nutritional and medical needs met, and there's a bit left over for the family. Basically, it is the best money I have ever spent. Some kids that don't have sponsors fill up by making dirt patties to eat to stop the hunger. This of course creates the worm problem and infections so they have to be treated when the clinic comes four times a year. There is no charge for the medical attention, but a tin is put at the clinic, for those that want to drop in money. Most days the tin is empty.

On the streets you must watch for motorcycles, with up to four people on them, as they fly by passing and honking. If you don't want to take a taxi (motorbike) you can jump on the trucks and stand up in the back with many other people. Both forms of transport are scary. The roads are broken up and dirty, and there are people with food and old clothes for sale everywhere on the pavement.

All the pediatricians, doctors and surgeons worked from 7:30 a.m. to about 5 p.m., and they were exhausted. One said he had seen more than 70 patients by early afternoon.

Everything had to be translated through an interpreter, to the medical staff, then to the patient, then back again, as Creole is the commonly spoken language in Haiti.

At night we walked through banana tree-lined pathways that weaved between shacks and homes to get to the beach.

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Employee Delivers Humanitarian Care in Haiti

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The swim helped clear our minds and felt so good. Haitian children would come out of nowhere to hold your hand and follow you wherever you went. Then, it was back again to start another day.

I cared for a baby that wasn't expected to live, and everyday I fed him a special drink with an eye dropper, then with a bottle as he got stronger. I was so shocked at how skinny and wrinkled he was, and then realized that is what a child looks like when she or he is starving. It's hard to watch but after the second week the baby was sitting up, smiling and ready to go home. I am not sure how long it will be before he is brought back sick again...

If you want to read more see Friends of the Children of Haiti on the Internet. They are a wonderful group of people who really care and do so much for the village of Jacmel and the surrounding areas.

There are so many stories I could share, but in short you cannot believe how the Haitian people live and survive on nothing.

I have volunteered many times around Victoria, but this was first time I'd travelled beyond the region and Canada, to donate my time and skills. It was the most rewarding, emotional up and down everyday task I have ever done. When you touch one of the people who try so hard to make it through each day with no window of opportunity, and see the tears and smiles of gratitude after they or their child have been treated, it is really hard to get on the plane to come back to everything we have. ♦

A man with congestive heart failure arrives at the clinic in a wheelbarrow "ambulance."

People waited, hoping they would receive care, during the two weeks the clinic was open.

Award Trip Combines Workplace Education and Fun

Submitted by Brian Lloyd, Design Technologist

WorkSafe BC hosted a "Youth Day" event on May 6, at the West Richmond Community Centre/Hugh Boyd Secondary School, in Richmond.

The focus was on educating young people preparing to enter the workforce, about the importance of safe work habits. I was lucky enough to have been invited by my son, Randy, and three of his friends, to attend as a parent/supervisor. The four boys had won an award for a short video they had produced for a high school project, which in turn was submitted to WorkSafeBC for an annual contest.

I contacted WorkSafeBC to make the arrangements. Breanna Graham, our gracious hostess for the day, had pre-arranged flights from Kamloops, a rental car and our itinerary. She couldn't tell me if the boys had won first or second place, as it was to be a surprise.

She also informed me that the other semi finalists were from Salmon Arm and would be on the same flight as us. Arriving at the airport for our morning flight, I spotted what would appear to be the other group quietly awaiting the boarding announcement. (The rivalry begins).

There were two boys, and a young woman

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Trip Combines Workplace Education and Fun

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who appeared to be the adult supervisor. After jokingly discussing with my group about how we might "take 'em out" (ensuring a first place finish for us) I decided the best course of action would be to just walk up, introduce ourselves and say "hello". We did, and as it turned out, our paths would cross several times thoughout that day, and we were to become friendly in the process.

The day's event was to run from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m. There were educational booths and activities such as challenging your skills against professional CFL players, trying your hand at wheelchair basketball, testing your CPR skills, learning about fall protection, and operating a crane or excavator on a computer simulator.

Other fun included live performances by local youth bands, a video game trailer, a barbecue with refreshments, a simulated confined space rescue performed by a professional emergency rescue team, and of course....the award presentation for the winners of the video contest.

Also an i-Pod Touch was to be given away that day to some lucky recipient, through a random text messaging draw. I was determined to win that one, but my son turned out to be the lucky one that took it home.

At the video award presentation, there were two categories, Grade 9-10 and Grade 11-12. There were two awards for each category.

The group that I was escorting, Grade 10 students from South Kamloops Secondary School, received the second place finish, which included $500 cash to share among them and $1,200 for their school. Theirs, and other winning videos can be viewed on the WorkSafeBC website.

I was thrilled to have the opportunity to share this experience with the young men and to see how an event such as this can educate people of all ages.

Entering the workforce with an awareness of safety practices and their importance can be extremely valuable, ensuring a long and healthy career. Kudos to WorkSafeBC – their efforts are highly appreciated! ♦

A representative from Peter Kiewit Sons Co. (sponsor of the video contest prize) with Justin Erickson, Randy Lloyd, Kameren McDonald and Mitchell Foster.

The students are instructed on wheelchair basketball, by people who play the sport.

Justin Erickson "hangs out" as he experiences fall protection.

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
Staff Roundup

Tracy Cooper has announced his intentions to retire after 35 years of service, and is currently working from HQ on corporate initiatives. **Patrick Livolsi** has taken on the regional director responsibilities for the South Coast Region during this period.

Farren Wilson was the successful candidate in the competition for the new radio and electronics field technician position, located in Prince George.

Ed Storm is Manager of TransLink Initiatives. **Jeff McConnell**, who worked closely with Ed at Partnership and Project Development, will act as Manager of Partnership and Project Development.

Ian Pilkington was successful in the competition for the new Chief Geotechnical, Materials and Pavements Engineer, at HQ's Engineering Branch.

Yongmei Chen has accepted a position as a Research Officer/Policy Analyst in the Pacific Gateway Branch.

Carl Lutz is the Bulkley Stikine District Operations Manager, based in Smithers. This is a key position within the district and includes responsibility for service areas 24 and 25. ♦

Northern Region Staffing Update

Submitted by Lenora Fillion, Regional Manager of Business Services

The Northern Region would like to welcome new staff, wish a fond farewell to those moving on, and congratulate those taking on new roles.

Peace District

As an EPDP goal, **Stephanie Mancha** is leaving her clerical duties and will be acting in the District Operations Technician position located in the Fort St. John office until September.

Ashley Johnston, fulfilling an EPDP goal, will be acting in the District Operations Technician position located in Dawson Creek until the end of September. Ashley's base position is a Permit Clerk in the Dawson Creek Permit Centre.

Kevin Hanna joined us for a Temporary Appointment as a Road Area Manager in the Peace. Kevin is from BC Timber Sales and will be with us until mid September. He will be working out of the Dawson Creek office under the direction of Richard Prill, District Operations Manager.

Corporate and Operational Services

Kevin Johnston recently joined the ministry under the TELP program. He is a recent graduate from the Engineering Design and Tech Program at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops.

Kevin will be working as the Quality Services Technician, assisting Karen Westlund, Manager Quality Services out of the Prince George Regional Office.

Kevin will be taking on the management of pavement marking and electrical services contracts and support of the road and bridge maintenance regional audit program.

Engineering Group

Brendan Miller has joined the Geotechnical group on a Temporary Appointment from ILMB until November.

Brendan is working as the Aggregate Terrain Geoscientist and is assisting Satish Prasad, Regional Aggregate Resource Manager, to secure tenure on gravel pits and other related issues. Brendan will be working out of the Peace District's Fort St. John office.

Gerry Leering is working with **Daryl Nolan**, Manager Environmental Services, as the Environmental Services Technician until November. Gerry joins us from the Ministry of Environment and will continue to work out of his current office in Fort St. John.

Craig Miller and **Braden Morrison** started as auxiliaries in June, with our survey group, as Survey/Geomatics Technicians. They have both completed their first year of Geomatics at BCIT and will be with us until the end of August.

Project Management

The Project Management group held a competition to fill two Regional Project Manager vacancies located in Fort St. John. The successful candidates were **Catherine Deol** and **James Oni**.

Catherine has been with the ministry for four years and was initially hired as a clerk in the district office. Through the EPDP process, she has continued to develop her skills within the ministry and moves from her base position as a Project Technician into her new role as a Regional Project Manager.

James comes to us from Whitehorse and has a strong background in project management in the petrochemical industry. He moved to Canada five years ago from his homeland of Nigeria. After James' time in the Yukon, he looks forward to the "southern" winter of the Peace.

Stephanie Rothman, Regional Project Technician, has left the North to take on new challenges with the Evergreen Line Project in Vancouver.

Congratulations to all of you! ♦

In Memoriam: Roxanne (Sheriff) Richardson

Submitted by Teresa Bepple, Financial Analyst

Roxanne (Sheriff) Richardson passed away on June 10, with her husband Jim Richardson at her side. Roxanne was only 57 years old. She worked with Corporate Services in the Southern Interior Region, at the Kamloops office, from 1989 to 2003 before taking voluntary departure. Jim Richardson and Roxanne met and married while working with the ministry in the early 90s. Jim is our Regional Transportation Engineer working out of the Kamloops office.

Roxanne was a very well liked and respected member of our team. She was dedicated to her job and worked well beyond what was expected of her. She saw the best in people, was always very patient and kind, and had a true desire to help others. She never shied from the most daunting task and liked to present her co-workers with "challenges," bringing out the best in all of us.

Roxanne was an advocate for healthy natural living, good nutrition and fitness. She started the coffee break walking group that still heads out for a quick walk every day at coffee time. She had many interests and if you ever had a question about gardening, investing, environment, food, composting, buying a car, etc., she would always provide you with a passionate and well-researched answer and/or advice.

Roxanne would say that people worry too much about wasting time and should plan to "waste more time," as our lives are too busy, and we need to take time to "just be ourselves."

Roxanne was a very generous person with a positive outlook on life and was everyone's friend. She worked hard and always had a smile or laugh for those around her. She was an inspiration to all she touched, and she will be fondly remembered and greatly missed. Our sympathy and condolences are extended to Jim Richardson, and Roxanne and Jim's family and friends. ♦